

hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

OUTSOURCING AND FREE TRADE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, recently there has been a great deal of discussion, angst and some protectionist legislation concerning the so-called outsourcing of American jobs to foreign countries. In fact, companies choosing to purchase services abroad have been termed "Benedict Arnold" companies by some.

But despite all the inflammatory language and distorted facts, the truth is that outsourcing is only one side of a two-way street known as free trade. Almost one-third of our economy is dependent upon that two-way street. Thus, we should examine the little-noticed other side of the street called insourcing.

Data from the Commerce Department shows that during 2003, the U.S. posted a \$53 billion surplus, surplus, in trade and private services with the rest of the world. We outsourced \$77 billion in services overseas, but foreigners turned around and insourced \$130 billion of services from the U.S. In other words, foreigners demand more of our services than we demand of theirs.

Unfortunately, Americans are presently hearing only one side of the outsourcing story. They only hear about the jobs that are going out of the U.S. They do not hear anything about the jobs coming into the U.S.

According to the Treasury Department, insourcing accounted for 6.4 million jobs nationwide in the most recent survey; and these insource jobs paid 16½ percent more than the average domestic job. Even though many foreign workers work for less, jobs are insourced into the U.S. because our workers tend to be better educated. They tend to have better skills. They tend to be more productive. We can compete internationally.

If you want to get a better idea of the kind of insourcing coming to America, let us just take a look at the automobile industry. Honda is hiring 2,000 new Americans in Alabama to build SUVs, and Nissan will add more than 2,000 jobs by expanding their plants in Tennessee and Mississippi. Toyota will add 2,700 jobs in my home State of Texas in the next 2 years. In fact, Mr. Speaker, foreign corporations now employ almost half a million workers in my home State. Nearly one in 10 jobs

in the U.S. is directly linked to the export of U.S. goods and services.

Now, protectionist anti-outsourcing legislation unfortunately threatens each and every one of these jobs. If we do not permit the outsourcing of jobs overseas, other nations will not permit the insourcing of jobs into the U.S. It is free trade that creates more job opportunities for the unemployed, increases their wages and improves the standard of living for American workers. Free trade also delivers a greater choice of goods and services to our consumers at lower prices. That means American families get better products using less of their paycheck.

Competition has always helped the consumer. It does not matter if that competition comes from Canada or Kentucky. Over the past few years, prices have dropped for a wide array of goods and services that face foreign competition. For example, TVs cost 10 percent less; computers cost 25 percent less. Yet we pay a lot more for services that do not receive foreign competition, goods and services, for example, college tuition, prescription drug goods, and cable TV service.

Those who care about creating jobs and reducing unemployment here at home should stop fighting free trade and its outsourcing component and start fighting the root cause of job flight overseas, mainly too many taxes, too many regulations, and too many frivolous lawsuits.

The Small Business Administration found in the year 2000 that Americans spent \$843 billion complying with Federal regulations. Too many mind-numbing regulations send jobs offshore.

Mr. Speaker, the cost of litigation now accounts for one-third of the price of the aluminum ladder. It doubles the price of a football helmet, and it adds \$500 to the sticker of a new car. Too much litigation sends jobs offshore.

The United States has a higher corporate tax burden than any industrialized nation with the exception of Japan. This even includes several of the former Soviet bloc countries. Too much taxation sends jobs offshore.

Mr. Speaker, beyond the obvious economic benefit of free trade, fundamentally we must recognize that nations do not trade with nations; people trade with people. Every American citizen and every American company should have the right to determine the origin of the goods and services they want to purchase.

With the exception of national security considerations, it should not be the role of the Federal Government to tell consumers or companies where they buy their goods. Besides our financial well-being, it is our fundamental economic liberty that is at stake.

□ 1830

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLINE). Under a previous order of the

House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PUTTING AMERICA'S WORKERS FIRST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the problem we have with America's unemployed workers.

My Texas colleague talks about how outsourcing is so good, and offshoring, well, I know it is not good in the area I represent because it is a blue collar district. For years and years we have suggested to our young people to go and get a high-tech skill so they can become a computer programmer, so they will not have to be a machine shop owner or a machinist, that they can go into the new economy. All of a sudden now we are finding out that that new economy, if you are making \$45,000 a year in the United States, you are having to compete with someone around the world who is happy to make \$15,000 a year with your same level of education. So we do have a problem.

Tomorrow marks the end of March and the 3-month period since the temporary extended unemployment compensation program began phasing out. During this last 3-month period, over 1 million American workers have exhausted their regular unemployment benefits and have been unable to receive additional help. There are 72,000 unemployed workers in my own State of Texas that have exhausted their benefits. There is no comparable figure in more than 30 years when this country has had so many unemployed workers exhausting their benefits.

Despite these undisputable facts, the administration and our Republican colleagues refuse to extend this important program, saying economic growth will yield job creation. Well, it has not for the last 3 years. Every indicator out there disputes this logic and tells the same story: This country is facing a jobless recovery. If it is a jobless recovery, it is not really a recovery where I come from.

Mr. Speaker, these indicators are bad enough, but, unfortunately, there is another story behind them that makes the outlook even worse. The unemployment rate is currently 5.6 percent, but the true story is that rate does not take into account the 2.8 million Americans who have given up looking for a job and left the labor force altogether. These Americans are just as unemployed as those counted by the Labor Department; and if we include them in our statistics, the true unemployment rate stands at 7.4 percent.

When we look at the job growth figures, we see that 21,000 jobs were created last month. The true story, however, is that none of these jobs were in the private sector. Furthermore, the country needs to add about 125,000 jobs a month just to keep up with population growth. If we count the net 2.3 million jobs that have been lost to this country since this administration took office and add the 4.7 million jobs that are needed to be created since then to support our population growth, we have a 7 million job gap in the labor market.

The measly job growth we have seen in recent months will not even begin to put a dent in that job gap; and, to make matters worse, the rolls of our long-term unemployed workers are growing. Technically, workers who have been out of work for more than 6 months are defined as long-term unemployed. Six months also happens to be the maximum length of regular unemployment benefits. Therefore, most economists consider the number of long-term unemployed workers as indicative of the need for temporary unemployment benefits.

If my Republican colleagues need further proof of our need for a temporary extension of unemployment benefits, I would encourage them to look at the number of long-term unemployed workers in this country. In each of the past 3 months, almost 1.9 million unemployed workers have been counted as long-term unemployed. America's long-term unemployed represent 23 percent of the country's total unemployed workers, at least those who are counted.

Moreover, the level of long-term unemployment is three times what it was when the recession began. Job growth in this country is, without question, weaker than any other post-World War II recovery period. As each week of this jobless recovery goes by, 80,000 more workers exhaust their unemployment benefits and have nowhere to turn.

A recent Congressional Budget Office study shows that, without these benefits, unemployed Americans double their chances of entering poverty and lacking health insurance. Mr. Speaker, the need for an extension of unemployment benefits has never been greater. In the absence of true job creation, it is imperative that these benefits be extended.

Again, when we see outsourcing, offshoring happening in the high-tech community, and we see the continual hemorrhaging of blue collar jobs being lost, our American worker's income security and their health depend on that extension.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SOUDER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CHILDREN'S EXPRESS LANE TO HEALTH COVERAGE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite my colleagues to cosponsor bipartisan legislation authored by Senator RICHARD LUGAR in the United States Senate and myself in the House of Representatives known over here as H.R. 4031. The measure will help States in their efforts to enroll income-eligible children in the States Children's Health Insurance Program, commonly referred to as SCHIP.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, despite gains in recent years, nearly 9 million children in the United States remain uninsured. Of those, nearly 7 million children are eligible for public health insurance coverage. H.R. 4031, the Children's Express Lane to Health Coverage Act, builds on the successful legislation of the 106th Congress that provides States with the option of using the National School Lunch Program, the Women's, Infants, and Children Program to identify uninsured children eligible for benefits under the SCHIP and Medicare program. Many States have used this cost-saving option successfully to promote the well-being of income-eligible children.

While existing law does allow children to be income-eligible for WIC based on their enrollment in the Medicare program, it does not give the States adequate flexibility to make an income determination for eligibility for the Medicaid and SCHIP program based on the uninsured child's enrollment in WIC or another public program.

The Children's Express Lane to Health Coverage Act will give States the option of establishing that their Medicaid or SCHIP financial eligibility rules are satisfied when a family presents proof that their child is already enrolled in another program with comparable income levels. Current Federal law does not provide the flexibility that is necessary for this.

If we are to give our children, Mr. Speaker, a jump-start with quality health care and quality health insurance, I would encourage strongly that my colleagues consider becoming cosponsors of H.R. 4031, which is affectionately known as the Children's Express Lane to Health Coverage Act. It is vital, it is important, it is for our Nation's children.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HINCHEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

FREE/FAIR TRADE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I hail from the Great State of Ohio, where we have lost 300,000 jobs since George Bush has been President, 2,000 a week, 260 a day. In Youngstown, the biggest city in my district, we have an unemployment rate of 16 percent. In the city of Warren, the second largest city in my district, we have an unemployment rate of 14 percent. This President's economic policies are clearly not working in the industrial Midwest.

Now, the gentleman from Texas who was up a few moments before me was talking about all of the benefits of free trade, and he said that it increased wages in this country, he said it increased the standard of living in this country, and he said that it lowered prices for consumers in this country. I do not think we can challenge the fact that free trade has clearly lowered prices or kept prices from getting out of control and from skyrocketing. I do not know if they clearly show the level of savings. I think the savings by off-shore cheap labor has been a boom for the corporations but not necessarily a boom all the way across the board for consumers.

But what I want to talk about tonight is just a few issues that I think the American people are beginning to recognize and understand.

First, on the issue of unemployment benefits.

We have human beings, we have workers who work throughout the United States of America who are running out of unemployment benefits, who are going to have nothing left, and we want to talk about the intellectual battles of free trade while United States citizens are going to fall through the cracks.

This administration's priorities have been tax cuts, tax cuts, tax cuts to the top 1 percent. They are a one-trick pony, this administration is and this Congress is. A one-trick pony. Tax cuts are the answers for any social ill that we have here, and it is not working.

Second, the debate between free trade and fair trade, I think, has been obscured. You are either for free trade, or you are against it, and you are for putting up protections and not agreeing to any trade whatsoever. When I talk about fair trade, I think we need to look at the issue on the whole, and we need to say to each other what the benefits of trading are and what are the downsides of free trade are.

The downsides are obvious. We are displacing workers. We have unemployment rates going through the roof. We are losing good-paying jobs for menial-wage jobs, and we are competing with a labor force that is getting paid nickels an hour, no health care benefits, no environmental relations, no OSHA, and we are asking American workers to